

# The Quest

## Trinity Church

Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts

February 2026

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### About Trinity Church

Trinity Church is an ecumenical Open and Affirming (ONA) congregation. We are affiliated with the American Baptist Church, the Episcopal Church, the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church.

Sunday service hours:

10 a.m. (Nursery care is available.)

Office hours:

Monday - Wednesday - 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Thursday – 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

(413) 625-2341

Pastor - Benjiman Durfee

Leadership Team Co-chairs:

Beth Martin & Wayne Perrea

Music Director - Keith Rollinson

Church Secretary - Brook Batteau

Nursery Attendant - Lisa Porter

Facilities Staff- Pat Valeski

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### *From Pastor Benjiman Durfee*

Dear Trinity,

As Ash Wednesday quickly approaches, I've been wondering how we might better embody the season of Lent at Trinity Church.

Traditionally, Lent has been described as a time of repentance or self-examination. That language can be meaningful, but I wonder if another way of approaching the season is to notice where our lives have become *disconnected* (from God, from one another, and even from ourselves) and to gently *practice returning*.

Returning feels especially important right now. Many of us are feeling weary, shaped by the pace of life, by anxiety about the world, by grief, by anger, or by a sense of powerlessness in the face of injustice. In moments like these, disconnection can begin to feel normal (especially in the age of social media). And yet, again and again, our faith teaches us that deep love, joy, peace, and hope are not distractions from what is broken in the world, but rather they are part of how we faithfully respond to it.

If that is true, or even partly true, then Lent might be less about willpower and more about attention. Less about giving something up as punishment and more about making space, refocusing, and returning to what matters most. Perhaps, over time, those small acts of reconnection can become one of the ways new life quietly takes root among us.

That is the idea behind our **Lenten Connection Groups**. During Lent, we are hoping to form a handful of small

groups that meet once a week from Ash Wednesday through Holy Week. Each group will share a simple practice such as prayer, making art, journaling, walking together, shared meals, or acts of service. These will not be classes or discussion-heavy gatherings. Think of them instead as shared rhythms for the season, places to show up as you are, build relationships, and practice faith together. The groups are open to the wider community, but I hope many of us in the congregation will consider participating.

I am also wondering who among us might feel a nudge to help facilitate one of these groups. If that is you, I would love for you to bring your own ideas into the conversation. For example: maybe you want to meet for breakfast once a week; maybe you want to invite folks over for an hour of hymn singing; or maybe you want to organize a weekly Rainbow walk. What practices make you come alive? What rhythms have been meaningful in your own life? What kind of space would you like to help create for others? Facilitators will not be experts or teachers; just people willing to help hold a rhythm and walk alongside others for the season. Support and guidance will be offered.

My hope is that, by the time we reach Easter, we will not just speak about resurrection, but will have begun to live our way toward it, feeling a little more **connected**, a little more **grounded**, and a little more **capable of love** in a world that desperately needs it.

If any of this sparks your curiosity, whether joining a group, helping to lead one, or simply learning more, I would love to hear from you.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Ben

### CLOTHES CLOSET FEBRUARY DATES

**Wednesday:**  
the 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, 11:00-3:30

**Saturdays:**  
the 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 10:00-12:00



### FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

January has certainly been a much “quieter” month for Trinity Church in comparison to the blessed albeit very busy Advent and Christmas Celebrations! Sadly, we experienced the loss of two of our dearest partitioners, our Beloved Patriarch Roger Parland and our Beloved Matriarch Kathleen Upton. Their Memorial services were truly beautiful, and each honored the amazing lives of these very special people. Roger and Kathleen will be deeply missed however their spirits will remain with us as we continue to share our many memories of them together.

Pastor Ben was able to take an intensive theology course at his seminary campus in Evanston Illinois for a week this month. We welcomed the Reverend Kate Stevens back to our pulpit on

Sunday the 18th while he was away. We remain extremely grateful to Rev. Kate for sharing six wonderful months with us as a Bridge Pastor during our Search and Call period which finally ended with the calling of our extraordinary Pastor Ben!

During our January meeting we met via zoom with the Reverend Ralph Howe and his wife, the Reverend Ingrid Lucas-Howe. They discussed the Earth Day Event scheduled for April 18th: *Confluence 2026 Earth Day Renewal*. The event will take place at the Brattleboro UMC and Retreat Farm. Trinity Church will be joining in on this very special day. More information on this wonderful event will be forthcoming.

The Leadership Team will be working in conjunction with the Feasibility Team on the agenda for the Annual Meeting scheduled for March 1<sup>st</sup>, immediately following our church service. The meeting will include the usual Annual Meeting agenda items, with votes and then move to the Feasibility Agenda items, culminating in a vote on each project in our proposed capital campaign. As previously noted, the Feasibility Study Report is available in both hard copy and electronically. This is of course an extremely important meeting in regard to the future of Trinity Church! We look forward to seeing all of you in the fellowship hall on March 1 for a delicious Potluck luncheon and the meeting.

With Prayers and Blessings from The Leadership Team,

*Sarah Neelon, Nancy Parland, Wayne Perrea and Beth Martin.*

### ANNUAL MEETING, MARCH 1



**Please attend  
the Annual Meeting:  
March 1st,  
after worship.**

### STEWARDSHIP GIVING INFORMATION

Stewardship envelopes are available on the table at the back of the sanctuary for those who want to use them.

If you have not made a pledge for 2026 and would like to, please see Julie Bailey or Sue Mead for a pledge card or call the office.



### WHAT'S PASTOR BEN READING?

As part of the EcoPreacher Cohort I'm participating in, we were assigned to read a selection from "Indigenous Prophecy and Mother Earth" by Sherri Mitchell, a Penobscot lawyer, activist, and spiritual teacher. Drawing on Indigenous wisdom, Mitchell describes a worldview rooted not in domination or control, but in **kinship**, which is a way of understanding land, water, people, and all living beings as relatives in a shared web of life.

Mitchell contrasts this with the **stewardship** model many of us know well. Stewardship has mattered: it calls us away from reckless exploitation and toward responsibility. But it can still leave humans in charge, managing, deciding, and controlling. That same logic shows up far beyond environmental issues. It shapes a world marked by war, racism, and ecocide, where some lives are treated as expendable and some lands as disposable.

Indigenous traditions offer us another vision. As Mitchell writes, "We have forgotten that we are part of the Earth, not separate from it." When *relationship* replaces *hierarchy*, care grows from *belonging* rather than *obligation*. Harm to the earth and harm to human communities are no longer separate problems, but *signs of the same broken story*.

Kinship, then, becomes more than an ecological idea and becomes a form of spiritual resistance. It forms people who are less willing to dominate, discard, or dehumanize. In a world shaped by so much fear and force, what might it look like for us to live as kin?

### CONFLUENCE: 2026 EARTH DAY RENEWAL

## Save the Date!

*Awakening, Healing, Restoring, Collaborating*

**Saturday, April 18, 2026, 9:00 am at The Retreat Farm, Rte. 30, Brattleboro, Vermont**

Sponsored by New England UM Conference Creation Care

The Beloved Community: Brattleboro UMC and First Baptist Church Brattleboro

Trinity Church, Shelburne Falls, Massachusetts

PUTTING YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER



# Putting Your House in Order

*A guide to smart life planning*

**February 22, 2026**

11:00 AM - Light lunch included

*Please register to receive your free workshop binder!*

## BRING PEACE OF MIND...

with this step-by-step program that helps to de-mystify organizing your estate (property, accounts, investments, and more). At any age, it is never too early or late to begin!

## A GUIDE FOR LEARNING...



how to organize important information.



about assigning guardianship to your children.

[trinitychrch@gmail.com](mailto:trinitychrch@gmail.com)



ways to communicate your wishes.



the importance of a will.



ways to establish your legacy.



how to plan for pet care.

Register with church office:

Trinity Church

17 Severance Street

Shelburne Falls MA 01370

[trinitychrch@gmail.com](mailto:trinitychrch@gmail.com) or 413-625-2341



United Methodist Foundation  
of NEW ENGLAND

**WELCOME**

TO YOUR COMMUNITY  
*Clothes Closet*

2<sup>ND</sup> AND 4<sup>TH</sup>  
WEDNESDAY  
11 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.

2<sup>ND</sup> AND 4<sup>TH</sup>  
SATURDAY  
10 A.M. - 12 P.M.

OF EVERY MONTH

West County Community Meals

**TRINITY CHURCH**

"At This Table Everyone Is Fed"

**WEEKLY**

**COMMUNITY MEAL**

**All Are Welcome**  
Eat In or Take Out

**Friday Nights 5:30 p.m.**

Trinity Church 17 Severance St, Shelburne Falls MA (413) 625-2341

<b>CALENDAR FOR FEBRUARY 2026</b>
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<b>Sunday</b>	1	10 am. Service
Monday	2	9:30 Playgroup
Tuesday	3	
Wednesday	4	9:30 Playgroup
Thursday	5	11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA
Friday	6	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal
Saturday	7	
<b>Sunday</b>	8	10 am service
Monday	9	9:30 Playgroup
Tuesday	10	
Wednesday	11	9:30 Playgroup; 11 am - 3:30 pm Clothes Closet; Climate Chorus (7-8:30 pm)
Thursday	12	7 pm AA
Friday	13	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal
Saturday	14	10 am - 12 pm Clothes Closet
<b>Sunday</b>	15	10 am service
Monday	16	9:30 Playgroup
Tuesday	17	
Wednesday	18	9:30 Playgroup; 7 pm Ash Wednesday
Thursday	19	11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA
Friday	20	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal
Saturday	21	
Sunday	22	10 am service; Putting Your House in Order
Monday	23	9:30 Playgroup
Tuesday	24	
Wednesday	25	9:30 Playgroup; 11 am - 3:30 pm Clothes Closet
Thursday	26	11 am Contemplative Prayer Group; 7 pm AA
Friday	27	10:30 am Kids Movement; 5:30 pm Community Meal
Saturday	28	10 am - 12 pm Clothes Closet
Sunday	29	10 am service
Monday	30	9:30 Playgroup
Tuesday	31	

# *The Quest*

LECTIONARY FOR FEBRUARY 2026	
February 1	Micah 6:1-; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:1-12; Psalm 15
February 8	Isaiah 58:1-9a, [9b-12]; 1 Corinthians 2:1-12, [13-16]; Matthew 5:13-20; Psalm 112:1-9, (10)
February 15	Exodus 24:12-18; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9; Psalm 2 or Psalm 99
February 22	Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11; Psalm 32

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